



Department of Justice

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HOGSETT ANNOUNCES HISTORIC AGREEMENT WITH INDIANAPOLIS MOTOR SPEEDWAY REGARDING FEDERAL DISABILITY ACT

United States Attorney says agreement, Speedway updates will improve access for all

PRESS RELEASE

INDIANAPOLIS – “Today’s announcement serves as a reminder that the march toward equality continues, and this Office remains dedicated to defending the civil rights of all Indiana residents,” said United States Attorney Joseph H. Hogsett. “For more than a century, the Indianapolis Motor Speedway has been a treasured symbol for all Hoosiers, and this agreement ensures that it will now be accessible to all Hoosiers.”

Joined by Indianapolis Motor Speedway (IMS) Director of Engineering Kevin Forbes, as well as representatives from the disability community, Hogsett announced the execution of an agreement between the IMS and the United States Department of Justice that sets a definitive time-line for bringing the 104 year-old Speedway into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

“I’d like to thank the representatives from both the Speedway and the disability community for their hard work and dedication throughout this process,” Hogsett added.

As noted in the agreement, the Indianapolis Motor Speedway was built in 1909, and has undergone continuous upgrades since that time. The 345 acre facility includes a corporate headquarters, a museum, many garages, the iconic “Pagoda” tower, as well as numerous seating areas and suites. It is the largest spectator sporting facility in the world, and is among the oldest. Nearly all of the facility was constructed prior to the enactment of the ADA.

In 1999, an individual with a disability attended a practice session during Indianapolis 500 festivities at the Speedway. According to a complaint received by the United States Attorney’s Office at the time, the individual claimed that he was denied access to the pit area even though he had a pit pass, and was told it was due to his use of a wheelchair.

As a result, the U.S. Attorney's Office has worked with IMS officials over the course of multiple visits to the Speedway to identify what reforms and restructuring would be required to bring the facility into full compliance. All told, more than 360 features, elements, and spaces at the Speedway were identified as areas to be modified or improved to meet the requirements of the ADA.

Throughout this thorough investigation process, the leadership of IMS has cooperated with the U.S. Attorney's Office, and many of the identified issues have already been addressed. Examples include a number of substantial projects over the last few years to redesign or refurbish the IMS corporate headquarters, three major parking areas, a number of vista and grandstand areas, most concession stands, as well as many of the public restroom facilities.

Today's announced agreement sets out a path to complete compliance that includes modifying areas throughout the Speedway to improve access, altering various paths of travel, and ensuring that the Speedway's policies and training procedures provide equal access to the fullest extent feasible.

As part of the agreement, IMS will submit a report to U.S. Attorney Joe Hogsett every 90 days for the next two years, updating the U.S. Attorney's Office as to the progress that has been made toward completing these remedial measures. The Speedway has also agreed to permit follow-up inspections from DOJ officials, and the agreement stipulates that all future building projects must be in full compliance with the ADA.

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